

Government Service - 1912

Commissioner Dennett's "Roll of Honor."

Charles E. Cheatham, of North Carolina, an expert stenographer who entered the service in 1901, has been promoted the last three years from \$900 to \$1,600, and is now in the office of the Secretary of the Interior at a salary of \$1,620 per annum; L. M. Hershaw, of Georgia, who had been a file clerk for a number of years at \$1,400, has been promoted to \$1,600 and assigned to examine deserters and draft evaders. Other notable promotions are: W. W. Cochran, of Mississippi, \$1,000 to \$1,200; James A. Davis, of Tennessee, \$1,000 to \$1,200; David W. Utley, of Alabama, \$900 to \$1,000; Samuel H. Webb, of Virginia, \$720 to \$900; Charles N. Barker, of Kansas, \$720 to \$900; Benjamin S. Stewart, of the District of Columbia, \$720 to \$840; and Gabriel Fletcher, of Maryland, \$660 to \$720.

In addition to these promotions, Edward H. Hunter, of North Carolina, who resigned to enter the ministry, and is a candidate for one of the general offices of the A. M. E. church, was given the position of law examiner at \$1,600, the first colored man who ever held such a position in the classified service; and Sampson H. Brents was classified as a skilled laborer at \$660. While this is not a promotion in salary, it is a promotion in grade and tenure.

A "Merit System" That Means What Term Implies.

Commissioner Dennett makes the merit system of promotions mean what the term implies, namely, that those who show capacity for and performance of assigned tasks are rewarded according to ability and performance. The pigmentation of the skin and ethnological alignment are not factors which enter into his estimate of qualifications for advancement. He has a fixed, unvarying standard of justice, and applies it to all, having no thought as to race, position, or substance. He is calm and un-demonstrative, indulging in neither professions nor flatteries nor patronizing when dealing with members of the colored race.

A colored clerk who has been promoted to a high grade went to Mr. Dennett to thank him for his promotion. The commissioners reply to the clerk's expression of gratitude was: "You owe me no thanks. I have assigned you to a line of work that would show what you could do; you made good, and that's all there is of it."

It is well that the race should know and keep track of the white people in places of authority who are doers of the work of justice, and not savers only. Of this number, standing high in the galaxy of "Nature's noblemen," is the Hon. Fred Dennett, commissioner of the general land office.